

- I. *An Extract of a Letter to Dr Edward Tyfon from the Reverend Mr Charles Ellis, giving an Account of a young Lady, born Deaf and Dumb, taught to speak. That Costerus first invented Printing, Anno 1430. Of the Physick Garden at Amsterdam, and the Chamber of Rarities at Boln. Of a Monstrous Birth. Of the Quarry at Maestricht. Fr. Linus's Dyals at Leige. The Cachot or Rooms cut in the Rock of the Castle in Namur. Sir Jo. Mandevil's Tomb at Leige. The Friesland Boy with Letters in his Eye.*

Bruxelles ¹⁴ July, 1699.

Most Honoured Docter,

AT Haerlem I visited *Van Dalen*, the Author *de Oraculis*; he is setting forth another piece *de Sacerdotio Veterum*, a most Learned, Laborious, and very Instructive Work. He shewed me besides his own, a Curiosity of a young Lady born Deaf and Dumb, yet taught by Dr *Amman* to speak very intelligibly, I heard her read *Dutch* and *Latin*; she is about 17 years old, the only Child of a Wealthy Merchant.

Here I was desirous to see the first Book Printed by *Costerus*, which *Van Dalen* himself had never seen, and with much trouble obtain'd to do it; I find it not to be *Dinatus*, as the *Inscriptiones Hollandicæ* say, nor *Virgil* or *Tully's Offices*, as others have acquainted the World; but a *Dutch* piece of *Theology*, Printed on one side only of the Paper; and after this is a single page of *Latin* entitul'd, *Liber Vitæ Alexandri Magni*, which made some believe it to be *Q. Curtius*, but it is a Monkish *Latin* of that time. This and the *Theology* were Printed in the year 1430, whereas the *Inscriptions* and some other Authors have told us from *Costerus's* Picture, that Printing was by him invented but Anno 1440. But a Picture of *Costerus* before another *Dutch* piece (bound up in the same Volumn and Printed 1432) bears the date of 1430, under which Picture is the *Inscription* mention'd by Mr *Ray*, (only the date x years sooner) and the *Tetrastich*, which is transcrib'd by the Author of the *Inscriptions* from an *Effigies* of *Costerus*, which was then extant in a Garden this place, but is not now to be found. I

I was surpriz'd at *Amsterdam* to see a most curious *Physick Garden*, admirably instructed, and in excellent order; which because it has more space and foreign Plants, far exceeds *Leyden*. Here are also *Series Læctionum*, which I have, and shall send 'em at your Command. Our Travellers have not made much mention, as I know of, of these things, nor any at all of *Boln*, where is a Chamber well furnish'd with Rarities, considering there is no University, Schools nor Gardens, nor any Professors. There are no Catalogues Printed in *French* or *Latin*, but when I have furnish'd my Memory with the help of a little *Dutch*, if you have not receiv'd any Account, I shall transcribe them by themselves, being too long for a Letter. Besides these, there occur'd here a Rarity not then publicly expos'd, two Female Children joyn'd together from the Neck to the Navel; their Picture was with Arms embracing, and Legs twisted, all Parts and Joynts entire to both, the *Viscera* too all double and perfect, the Head only single, but appertaining to both, and looking over the right Shoulder of one, and the left of the other. They had been open'd before I saw them; I could not learn by the Mother or Father, whether the *Aspera Arteria* and *Gula* did not divide as they enter'd into the Stomach and Lungs, or whether they were continu'd separate, nor any account of the Brain; they were born alive before 7 Months: The Father, *John Ameston*, a *French* Soldier, but deserted to this place. He preserves them with the Skin and Muscles, by sponging them with spirit of Wine. He asks 300 Guilders for 'em, too much for a Traveller to expend upon one thing.

At *Maastricht* I went into the Quarry, of which you have an Account in your *Transactions*, but it is more wonderful than there describ'd, and more large, being 3 hours in length and one in breadth, and capable to shelter 100000 Men. It cost me a fit of an Ague, thro its excessive Chilness. The Stone dug from hence is much like our *Kettering*; the Jesuits have here a very fine Chappel built of it.

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Franciscus Linus's Dyals at *Leige*, the Original of those formerly in our *Privy Garden*, are shamefully gone to decay, none remaining of use, but that which distinguishes the hours by feeling, and the Globe which shews it in all other parts of the World. Here is but one in the Society that understands any thing of this matter, and he is endeavouring to make a Weather Dyal, that shall have a flux and reflux like the Sea, but it is yet brought to no perfection.

At *Namur* are no Curiosities, but Military, except only the *Cachot* cut in the Rock of the Castle, with Apartments for 600 Men, and all Rooms of use, as Kitchens, &c. this was done by the order of *Mareschal Boufflers* to defend the Garrison from the Bombs, and was the labour of four years.

I forgot that at *Leige* is *Sir John Mandevill's Tomb*, whose Epitaph is also at *St Albans* with us, which may be hard to be reconcil'd.

Since my coming to *Bruxelles*, I have seen a young *Friesland* Boy of about 5 years old; round the Pupil of whose Eye they pretend is naturally engraven *Deus Meus*, and the same in *Hebrew*. This is lookt upon as a prodigious Miracle in these parts; but upon nice surveying it, I could perceive it was only the *Iris* of the Eye, not circularly join'd, but lash'd out into *Fimbria*, which here and there might be thought to form some imaginary Letters; as beginning at the *Lacrymal* corner of the left Eye, there is something like D & I & V, but not a footstep for the strongest fancy to work out any more, nor any Letter of *Hebrew* in the right Eye, as they pretended. I don't doubt, but as the Boy grows up, the others may conjoin again: But it was like to have been of danger to me to have discovered this matter in these superstitious Countreys; for acquainting a Gentleman in *English* of this Cheat, one of the Mob happen'd to understand it, and I was forc'd to make the best of my way.

In another Letter from the *Hague*, dated *June 16. 1699*. The same Person writes that at this place there are very few natural Curiosities; but a piece of Art, that of its sort I believe never was parallell'd, which is perform'd by one *Elizabeth Pyberg*, who cuts in Paper not only Towns, as *Loo* and *Hounslerdyke*, but Faces to an extream likeness; She has done *King William* and *Q. Mary* better than any Limner I ever saw, and refuses 1000 Guilders for the pieces, it is so curious that I could not believe the Queen's Drapery not to be Point, till I had most exquisitely enquir'd into it.